

09/833,590. To avoid, any confusion, we mail today a second response which duplicates the response filed on March 3, 2003, but which corrects the serial number such that all accompanying papers now read 09/883,590.

In response to the Official Action dated December 2, 2002, please consider the remarks and amend the above-identified application as follows:

IN THE DRAWINGS

Please see the Drawing Change Authorization Request filed concurrently herewith.

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the specification pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.121 as follows (see the accompanying "marked up" version pursuant to §1.121):

Please delete the paragraph which starts on line 1, page 3 and ends on line 15, page 3 and replace with the following:

A number of companies have attempted to replicate the qualitative research experience over the Internet. However, to date, prior art attempts have been unsuccessful. None of the Internet based market research studies have created a virtual market research study or a virtual communication facility. More often than not the benefits of qualitative market research studies have been compromised. For example, many existing Internet based qualitative market research studies are conducted using on-line chat, whereby moderators and participants communicate through keystrokes. However, this question and answer format eliminates participant body language and facial expressions from the market research study. Another,

prior art attempt involves taping a study in progress and transmitting the signal to the sponsoring client across the Internet or phone lines. One problem with this type of focus group is that participant and moderator travel costs and time are not alleviated. Participants still must travel to get to the focus group study and consequently middle to small town size participants will be at large absent from the study. Some examples of these Internet based prior art techniques include: greenfield online; harris interactive; and e-focus groups, each of which has a “.com” address, and activegroup which has a “.net” address.

Please add the following paragraph on page 9, between lines 11 and 12:

The current invention offers audio and video conferencing over the Internet for individual and group market research interviews and integrated bulletin board and chat capabilities.

Please delete (1) the paragraph which starts on line 17, page 9 and ends on line 5, page 10 of the specification; (2) the paragraph which starts on line 6, page 10 and ends on line 18, page 10 of the specification; and, (3) the paragraph which starts on line 19, page 10 and ends on line 18, page 11 of the specification and replace with the following:

Figure 1a represents an exemplary flow diagram depicting the enrollment process for a general population sample 100 in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention. In step 102, the potential candidate logs onto the Web site hosting the qualitative study. In step 104, the potential candidate enters demographic information such as, but not

limited to, geographical location, profession, education, salary, age, gender, political affiliation, etc. In step 106, the potential candidate is trained so that the potential candidate is accustomed to the virtual focus group environment. For instance, one embodiment instructs the potential candidates on how market research studies are conducted and how each party participates. In step 108, follow-up potential candidate interviews are conducted on an as-needed basis should a sponsoring client wish to obtain further information in an effort to finalize the study's candidate pool.

Figure 1b represents an exemplary flow diagram depicting the enrollment processes for proprietary corporate/membership population samples 150 in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention. In step 152, market research candidates are accumulated from various pre-existing databases such as, but not limited to, customer lists, subscriber membership lists, and Web site visitors. ~~In step 154, the market research potential candidate pool is freshly solicited such as through e-mail, direct mail/advertisements, and new Web site visitors all of whom are finally selected via a direct telephone call.~~ In step 156, market research candidates who qualify for the participant pool are sent a participating package. This participating package includes an audio/video capturing device, software for conducting the virtual focus group, and instructions on how to use both the software and the audio/video sensing mechanism. In step 158, proprietary interviews are conducted amongst market research potential participants and the moderator. Should the sponsoring client request further information from a potential participant, they may communicate directly and privately to the moderator via a private chat screen for additional probing and/or follow-up proprietary

interviews can be conducted in step 162.

Figure 2 represents an exemplary flow diagram depicting the process involved in conducting a qualitative study 200 in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention. In step 212, a market research study is initiated amongst the moderator, the candidates, and often an observing, sponsoring company. First, in step 214, the moderator logs onto the Web site hosting the particular market research study using a special market research ID and pass code. During the same time period, in step 202, the market research candidates and participants log onto the Web site hosting the market research study with the participant's own market research ID and pass code. The market research participants comprise a reduced first portion of the set of candidates. After both the market research participants/candidates and moderator have logged on in steps 214 and 202, the moderator in step 208 is asked in step 208 whether or not the moderator wishes to conduct a preliminary interview with anyone. If so, in step 258 an interview is conducted. If not, the study continues with step 216. In step 216, both the moderator and the market research participants are presented with multiple screens in which audio/video images of the moderator and market research participants are displayed. While the moderator has an audio/video image of each market research participant, the market research participant has an audio/video image of themselves, the moderator, and audio/video images of other participants and their responses. In step 218, a stimulus which represents the product or service the sponsoring company wishes to evaluate is displayed to the participants by the moderator. <sup>Sub C2</sup> The stimuli can be, but is not limited to, ~~products, packaging, photos, concept statements, illustrations and/or commercials~~